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THE TWO
OFFERINGS.

A DRAMA.,



By The Author Of
THREE VOLUMES IN MINIATURE.

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LAMECH.



THE TWO OFFERINGS.

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Chamam son of Cain. Niseth, wife of Cain.
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A Messenger.

A Demon.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE I.

Eden. Near the gate of Paradise.

Cain, [standing by a heap of fruits and flowers.

THE morning sings—remembering Paradise,
As in the days my father sometimes speaks of.
Not then those fiery sword armed cherubim,
Forbid the gateway to that tree of life.

And from the full crofts of my husbandry.
I now have culled some fruits, in recognition
Of the Mysterious One, from whom my mother
Said she had gotten a Man.

Am I that Seed ?

The Man predicted, of whom she was thinking ?
I hear the hush of an inspiring hope,
Embathed in zephyrs rich with aroma,
That stray and lag beyond the sacred limit,
Weary with nameless exquisite perfumes ;
Those flowers forever hidden and untouched !
—A goodly patrimony—now not ours.
But there is sunshine in free rectitude.

The Two Offerings.

With a clear record, have I need to bring
A bleeding sacrifice, such as my parents,
With gathered branches, often dedicate,
Amidst the tongues of a dissolving flame?
They need it possibly—for they have erred.
But never indeed have I. My life is faultless,
All perfectly attired and unoffending.
My deeds have a vitality and purpose,
Securing the goodwill and generous friendship
Of the High Personage who walked and talked
Amidst flower hidden tents.

[Arranges and decorates the pile with flowers.]

This adds a grace.

[Standing, with arms extended towards the cherubim and gate of Paradise.]

THUS have I heaped the fruits of many trees,
The products of the fields: and ask of Thee,
O thou most Mighty One, some grateful token
Of blessing and of favor. In my heart,
I bring the confidence of well deserving,
And in my arms, the bounty of my fields.
Do I not serve Thee perfectly and well?

[Removes a few paces from the offering.]

Is not my harvest better than slain lambs?
These offerings bleat not as I lead them hither.
There is no torture in this gentle tribute.
My gift is not ensanguined. No disquiet
Precedes it; and no gushings save of streams
That dash in beauty to the green glad valley.
Cherish I not the uprightness within?

[Advances with outspread arms.]

The Two Offerings.

Accept me, ADONAI ! and accord
The grace of an acceptance. Let some seraph
Come now and take my gifts. Or let the fire
Descend, as I have seen it, and consume
This painless sacrifice.

[*Withdraws a little : sitting down,*
I'll watch awhile,
Patient and confident. Yes, sit me down,
Waiting and watching. These moss hidden roots,
Offer a couch beneath a flower hung tere.—

No token yet, nor any note approving.—
[*Abel in the distance approaching.*
Who comes up yonder avenue, between
Those towering trees superb and grandly weighted
Rising so rank with beauty, and embossed.
Such exquisite tracings, rapturously rich !
Such fruits such blossoms ! —Abel ?—Yes, 'tis he.
A lamb he leadeth gently. Ah, a fat one.
And will he deal the delicate harmless creature
A cruel blow. And seek to pacify
The Great, the Unknown, with the reeking blood
Of helpless innocence ?

[*Enter Abel with a lamb. Restraining its gambols :*
Abel. Yes, silly creature !

Cain. Unblemished, perfect, choicest of the flock.
Lovely, and white !

Now spare it, Abel, spare it.
What reason is there in an act like that ?

The Two Offerings

What is thy sin? or where the unfounded charge
Against this frolic creature? How much better
Is the rich bloodless tribute of my heap.
Delicious fruits and flowers Divinely graced.
While, with unsullied purity of purpose,
Waiting I sit, anticipating light,
And Heavenly recognition.

Abel. Brother, perhaps
He, the most kind, will have respect to thee,
And to thy offering. But for myself,
I have a diverse feeling. I am consoious
Of the decrepitude that hath befallen
Our parents and ourselves. We are not now
The free, offenceless, blest and blissful beings,
We would have been. The thorn of a decay,
Has pierced us and we feel it. But, while knowing
And while lamenting it, I have been taught
Something emphatic, which I fail to express,
And faintly comprehend. It is a feeling,
Or rather, a persuasion, that for all
Our sad defection and misfortunes, God,
The Rich One, the Exalted, has prepared
Some way of good: some outlet from this plight:
Some stately interchange.

Cain. Ah, these must be
Far straying thoughts, that sail like birds aloft
Yon glory canopied hills.

Abel. And He has taught us
To offer up the innocent, and atone—
Ah, who can know the greatness of our error? —
With blood of lambs, which may be emblematic.

The Two Offerings

Nay, I believe that it foreshadows something,
Harmonious with His justice and His love,
Beyond the mountains.

Cain. Abel, can that be ?
I never shall believe it. I have nothing
To expiate. And yet, suppose I had,
How could the bleeding of an innocent lamb,
The smoke and odor of a sacrifice,
Effect an expiation ?

Abel. If I knew,
I might enlighten thee. Yet, though I know not,
A restoration is connected with it.
And more that this, the offering is prescribed,
Yes, Cain my brother, by the Vanishing One,
Who sometimes talks with us.

Cain. Proceed then, Abel.
• We differ and take note. But here I watch,
Assured the while, and calmly confident,
The tribute of a glowing constancy,
Shall meet the simple favor of its quest.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE II.

Bank of a River.

Enter EVE. Sits on a stone, under a clump of vine wreathed trees. Sounds and glimpses of children and others in the openings.

Eve. FIRST, and both singly born. And yet
how different!

Cain is the sturdy one, the proud and lofty.
He stoops not and he soars. Now like the eagle,
Looks from behind the cloud : but gathers
something

Of blackness that befits not. Once I thought him
The promised Seed. Alas, I fear me now !
He was the first who leapt into my arms.
I joyed, and I believed he was the man,
That Seed the serpent's head destined to bruise.
Quickly another son succeeded him.

And this seemed ominous, a sign, a signal.
And rather interposed amidst my hopes,
As if they might be premature. And so

The Two Offerings.

We named him Abel, thus to train our spirits
To the expectancies of death and sorrow.
Oft, very often, has my heart upheaped,
By births by double births of sons and daughters,
But yet the first two hold preeminence.

[*Enter running* CHAGOR and YACHAL.

Chagor, my boy—alack! hast torn thy garment?
Unsoil those feet and hands in yonder rill,
And come to me again. And Yachal,—ah,
My romping girl! big drops of sweat are ready
To traverse those flushed cheeks.

Yachal. Yes, dear my mother,
But why seem you so sad: and all else gay?
The birds are musical, the lambs and kids
Gambol and hide mid flowers. Now dearest
mother, [Enter HORAM.]

Tell us of those rare walks, those trelaced paths
Pebbled with gems, deep fringed with odorous
plants,
Of exquisite beauty

Horam. Mother, O yes.

Eve. Alas!

The dream is dead the golden day is set,
The fangs of want have seized us, Life now
shuns us. [Enter CHAMAM.

For you I weep, my darlings.

Chagor. No! sweet Mother,
All is not lost, rich love survives to bless us,

The Two Offerings.

Think not so sadly of it.

Yachal. How fares Chamam ?

Eve. Son Chamam—of my Cain, of Cain my first born.

Hither, my boy : how dainty is thy cheek !
Resembling thy sweet mother's lovely Nisseth.
Dear lad, be not so fiery as thy father.
Impeach thy name, for it seems ominous
Of nothing very gracious.

Chamam. Mother, nay !

Hasty I am not. How I love the sport
With pebbles to earth the birds that fly so nimbly,
And quell their merry throats.

Eve. Child, that is naughty,
And not to be commended.

Horam. We remember
Hearing you sometimes speak with our sage father
Of things so wonderful !

Yachal. May we not hear them,
On this green bank ? Fairer art thou than we,
Though our kind brothers call us beautiful.
And they are not so handsome as our father,
Although we love them better.

Chagor. Even prettier,
Were you, dear mother, when in those rich bowers;
Or was our father, when you saw him first,
Endowed with nobler symmetry ?

Eve. Be good,
Sweet children, and be glad. Enough is left
To please us and to bless. What precious things,
The Kind One has preserved to us ! Sometime

The Two Offerings.

Perhaps I'll tell thee much. I cannot now,
For a charged cloud has overshadowed me,
And tinges all my musings.

Tipharah. But, sweet mother,
O tell us did you fear those stalking monsters?—
——Lo, here flits Zaaph!

Eve. Daughter of my son,
Of Cain my premier, let me kiss thy lips.
My gay one and my lovely, though thy name,
Zaaph my dear, denote far otherwise.
Thy liniaments are lofty as thy father's,
And as thy mother's peerless. She, my first,
The dawn star of my excellence, first wedded,
And rich in hope.

Yapheh. O mother. tell us, tell us,
Did you not laugh at the grotesque and saucy
Strange monkeys and their mimicry? Or were
They not in that fair Gan?

Eve. My praters, He
Who framed all creatures, loves variety,
And has provided for all genial moods,
And entertainments tasteful for each trait
And feature of his sons and of his daughters.
Be good and thus be blissful. Play not rudely.

Run off, all except Shamar.
Midst fruits and flowers how gleeful! But my son
My Shamar shuns the frolic?

Shamar. I am musing
Of something that I saw some eves ago.
It puzzles me, and might I crave, dear mother,
One word of counsel. Yet we cluster round thee

The Two Offerings

As a full nest of birds about to fly,
Upborne by unproved wings and fluttering ever.
Eve. I listen, Shamar.

Shamar. For thine ear alone,
My mother, is this tale. Rich was that Even,
The moon was up, round as a pearl white rose,
And softly sailing. Yonder—it was by
Those gray cliffs grandly jutting o'er the cove,
Beneath those huge trees interlocked, wherein
Fond birds were sweetly warbling. Seated there,
On the stern crag while gladness sighed around me
Midst twinkling fruits and leaves fanned by soft
airs,

Embosomed in exhilarating hope,
Transported to a region fanciful,
I sat, absorbed in glowing ecstasy,
Empleading with the future. When behold,
Yachal and Elpis, my most lovely sisters,
Walked up along the beach. I was about
To leave my seat and run to them. When lo,
Two men appeared beside them. Loftier
Than either of my brothers, and resembling,
But yet unlike them. While a steady light,
Silvery and pale but brighter than the moon,
Attended them. They prest my sisters' hands,
They kissed their cheeks with seeming ecstasy,
Spoke burning words, some of which indistinctly
I caught from where I sat.

Eve. It can not be !

Shamar, you have been dreaming.

Shamar. No, dear mother,

The Two Offerings.

But can you solve the riddle of their presence ?
In deeply whispered tones those strange ones said
"Bear you to that estate of dazzling bliss ?
No! and alas, I would not. But I will
Relinquish it for you, to share your love :
So dear to me are you."

Eva. Hark, that is treason,
If these were holy ones. Said they aught else ?
Shamar. They called themselves Sons of the
High Elohim.

Eve. And seemed your sisters pleased ?

Shamar. Sweet mother yes !
They seemed enchanted, overjoyed. The strangers
Were off as in a moment. Since that night—
I love my sister dearly—I would wed—
Ah she looks coldly on me. Once so genial.
Can you not counsel me, my tender mother,
Or aid ?

Eve. Alas, my boy. O what a flood
Of evil seems about to overwhelm us.
Surely it is not possible. Alas.
O bitter tree. O fruit that blights us ever.
My son, I know not, I will ask your father.
But turn your eyes to Yaphch, none is fairer.
She is both good and very beautiful ;
Esteems, admires you, and will crown your life.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE III.

Eden. Near the gate of Paradise.

[*Cain, [Waiting near his offering.*

[*Abel. Placing his lamb on a heap of boughs.*

Cain. I WAIT. What sign of favor is accorded?
My tribute—must it meet with no approval!
Abel has slain his lamb. Now on a heap
Of odorous branches from the leafy woods,
He places it. He speaks. I must be mute.

Abel. Great beyond all I know, and all I think,
O Thou offended One, whom in my heart,
I fear, yet love. And would propitiate,
With outpoured blood and contrite offering,
In manner simple and the role prescribed.
Draw near, O God. I know that I am sinful,
Each act imperfect, every thought shortcoming,
Dimmed and benighted, and all splendor lost.

The Two Offerings.

But O look down, respect the sacrifice,
Which seems foreshadowing things mysterious,
Beauteous and glorious, that I dream not of.
Stoop down, O God, and through the offering
Accept the unworthy offerer.

Cain. Abel—ah—

See ! a bright flame consumes the sacrifice,
With the green faggots and the flower clad fronds.
But mine is unapproached, is unregarded.
What can I think ? And will He still refuse
Those upiled goodly fruits ?

My heart is bitter.

What has this simple lad to recommend him,
That I have not, and I the elder too ?
My soul is stirred and muddy as a pool,
When blinding clouds roar madly as they rush
With drenching bursts, and smite the huddled
herds.

A levin flash dips from my murky thoughts.
Yes ! indignation winged and heated, points
My soul against the boy.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE IV.

A thicket by a rock. CAIN standing : a club in his hand : scattered fruits and flowers lying at his feet. CHAMAM approaching.

Cain. **THUS** is my glory crushed !

Chamam, (entering.) Father, shall I
Pick up these fruits and take them to our tent ?

Cain. No—leave them, and be gone.

A VOICE. Why art thou wroth ?
Why is thy countenance fallen ? If well thou
doest,
Shall there not be uplifting ? But if not,
Sin crouches at the door ! Thee he desires !
And rule thou over him.

Cain. Who spoke so near me ? —
I know ! —

Alas, my pride is trodden down.
My spirit flounders on the muddy flats.
The river of my hope is shrunk and fled.
I am o'ertopt and baffled.

Eve, (entering suddenly.) O my Cain !

The Two Offerings.

What troubles thee, my firstborn ? Can I do
Aught that will give thee gladness ?

Cain. Mother, where
Slinks the bland python that once cheated thee,
And robbed us all of glory ? I will meet him,
And cripple him with my club !

Eve. Alas, my son,
He was too shrewd for me : beware ! even thou,
Mayest by his guile be foiled..

Cain. I do'nt believe it.
I feel a surly rancor that shall match him.
Eve. My son my Cain, alas, that I could see thee
Cheerful and loving, as when yet a prattler,
I nursed thee on my knees ; and from my bosom
Fed thee in joyful hope.

Cain. Mother, no more !

Strides off.

Eve. Ah, I have dreamed about him frequently.
Alas, this dark deportment !

(Enter ADAM.) Come, my lord,
Toil craves some rest. Sit by me.

Adam. Was that Cain,
Who seems exasperated and extreme,
Kavah my gentlest, and goes o'er the hill
With hasty strides ?

Eve. 'Tis he indeed, my lord,
Proud and disdainful.

Adam. Meditating ill ?
Surely not 'gainst that brother whose meek words
Hang like a sunset splendor on the cloud
That hides a sullen purpose ?

Eve. Adam, I fear it,

The Two Offerings

One of his fairest sisters is the wife
Of this sad Cain. Whence then his discontent ?
Is he not happy in the gentle love
Of one so amiable ?

Adam. What can be his lack ?

Eve. I know not. But a spectre haunts the look,
That sometimes mars his features.

Adam. Can it be,
Some evil purpose prowls around his tent ?
Let us go forth by yonder rivulet,
My Kavah, where those luscious vines are
gleaming.— (*They arise and go.*)
Here, where rich fruits are merged in odorous
blossoms,
Come let us cheer our hearts.

Well I remember
The golden hour, when I awoke, and saw
A Being beautiful exceeding beauty,
Who smiled and spoke. And language like
sweet waters,
Gushed from the newmade fountain of my heart.
And comprehension like an ocean swept
With all its tides about me.

Then again,
After some days, in a most fortunate hour, —
My memory wafts it, like a song of birds
Over still waters from the pensive hills :—
I slept—how sweet the purport of that slumber.
When I awaked, before me stood The Prince.
And by the hand he held—O sweet surprise !
A new made being. What loveliness complete,

The Two Offerings.

What marvellous beauty showered me with delight.
Kavah, my princess, O my ravishing one :
What loveliness excessive.

Eve. Stolen by me—

Alas, that it should be so : ah, why was it ?
Yes, to participate my hapless doom,
The princely boon of immortality
Was juggled from thee. Death became thy
portion,
My fondest husband. And we saw, and, lo,
What opulence vanished.

Adam. Dearest Kavah,

Let us dismiss these thoughts. Accept the solace
Of good and glory that condemn not us.
Present inevitably is our plight.
But mellow are the fruits of resignation,
And filial confidence in our Creator,
Whose boon in hopeful tokens, glads our hearts,
Often and oft. From this commanding hill,
This breezy nook, this crowning eminence ;
Beneath these trees displayed in pristine beauty,
Alluring vouchers of The Marvellous Hand :
Vital with fruits, profuse with laughing blossoms,
How charming is the prospect. Songful gladness
Awakes around us gay with exultation.
And still more exquisitely touching, see
Our dear ones, beautiful as fragrant blossoms,
Enjoy their healthful sports. Blithe as the birds,
Merry as lambs and kids that skip with joy.
They see no hardship and they laugh at sorrow,

The Two Offerings.

In all this beautiful world.

Yapheh. (entering) My dearest parents.
O see those parrots—one is red, one green,
And now they climb—they use their crooked
beaks—

High up those lofty trees, so full of blossoms.
See, see.

Agmon. And there a humming-bird is dipping
Its long thin beak, poised on its misty wings
Sipping the nectar of that great pink flower.

Keras. Off for another feast, see ! pauses now
Full in the blissful sunshine.

Eve. Here come more
Scampering merrily. Where have been our
darlings ?

Azar. Climbing the hills, the crags, the fruit-
hung trees ;

Tracing the brooks, watching the shining fish.

Baah. Noting gay pictures in the quiet pools,
The duplecative image of each other !

Tocheleth. And the bowed heavens that stooped
below the hills.

Eve. Pleasant and healthful pastime.

Adam. This provides
Tuition for the graver toils of life.

Eve. Be kind, dear boys, and courteous to your
sisters :

And you my daughters likewise.

Adam. Love each other.
Let no coarse word be spoken.

Yachal. And, dear mother,

The Two Offerings.

We saw strange birds tall as the antlered elk,
With pendulous plumes prodigious. Yes and
others,
Where all the colors of the gem strewn garden
Seemed melted o'er their feathers by the streams
Of golden sunlight.

Chagor. Happened on a fountain
Boiling beneath a rock. The moving sand
Sparkled below the waters crystalline,
Verged with such fragrant roses. O it seemed
Reviving.

Shamar. Could cool founts of Eden, ever
Have been more sweet and pleasant.

Horam. Tell us, mother,
Something of those lost glories and delights.
Eve. If good betide us, at our noon repast,
When in our tent assembled, as we linger
To elude the noontide heat, I will recount
Something, contributing variety
To the smooth hours and careless quietude
Of your young hearts. Regrets belike may add
A pungent flavour : as the past revives
Eclipsed and shadow laden. Until then,
Some tasks require our presence.

Adam. And let each
Repair to the allotted toil. Nor smite,
By trifling or by indolence profane,
The elaborate moments of the ornate days
That beckon us far on, and halt not ever.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE V.

EVE in her tent door talking with ABEL.

CAIN passes.

ABEL. I LOVE him and have stinted nought
of honor.

And yet he frowns upon me. Saw you not,
Dear mother, that dread scowl?

Eve. Alas! my Abel.

There he goes sullenly by yonder brink.
I tremble to behold him. Must you go,
Dear Abel, must you go? Why not remain
Until your sire returns from yonder glen?
The children all are absent—make them glad.

Abel. My charge is such, dear mother, that I
must not.

A bear came down upon my flock this morning:
Two lambs are missing now.

Eve. Go then, my son.

The Two Offerings.

And farewell. God be with thee.

Abel. And with thee,

Kind mother—and each one of us. Adieu.

(going.)

Eve. Alas, this woeful day. How deep the taint
Of alienation and the cloud in Cain,
With lightning flashes. But in Abel oft
I mark a different spirit. Something meek,
A germ of holiness. Gentle and loving,
Noble and reverent. And withal so humble.
Placing himself so low, and lifting up
Others with fervent effort.

Yes, in him
God hath perhaps appointed me a race
To gladden earth at length, instead of Cain :
Whose offspring, if distinguished, may be famed
For recklessness gigantic. Can it be ?
Alas, alas, what bitter, burning thoughts !
Albeit a sweet and cooling consolation.
Flows by me like this river. And I think
It will be well with us, and God will bring
Glory from midst the blackness of our fall.

I hear some merry voices from the hills.
I see them flitting through the open wood.
They come, my birds ! and he my liege is coming.
It fills my heart with laughter. Though the dole
Of a lost splendor hurls its rock to crush me.

Behold the uppiled fruits. Come ! cheer your
hearts

The Two Offerings

With a regaling plenty. O my leige.
And you our dear ones all. See what a flock,
With beauty crowned and gladness !

Adam. Dearest Kavah,
How tireless the solicitude that charms us.
How thoughtful, how considerate thy love
That still consoles us. What indeed were life,
Without the enchanting presence of my Kavah,
My being beautiful ? Star of my lot,
Rich in the light of Heaven, and cloudless
 . shining !

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE VI.

Grapes and various other rich fruits in profusion heaped around. Parents and children reclining at their repast.

BIKRI. O PARENTS dear, we giddy chattering birds,
Laughingly come—though to an oracle.
We bring our nestlings, clamorous and unfledged
Musings that puzzle and o'ermaster us.
Cantlets of incidents from romps and rambles.
Sundries we know not, items we would learn.
Merrily flocking, we presume on privilege,
So oft accorded.

Elpis. In our late excursions,
Flapping and ebon tinted wings o'erswept us,
Sailing beyond the limit of our view.
It is your wont all lovingly to aid us.
Yet the impenetrable mystery !

Eve. Now must your Heaven instructed sire
dispense

The Two Offerings.

Knowledge with cautions needful, while we taste
Nectarious fruits, the grateful relishes,
By our Great Father graciously prepared.
How precious all His gifts ! Proceed, my
children.

Each one in turn : and, Eshcol, will you lead ?

Eshcol. My sire, as I was standing near a pool
Watching the little fish that in the shallow
And pebbled waters, seemed delighting ever
To glide or rest, with shining scales, and fins
That noiselessly impel them through the crystal.
Quick as a flash I saw a bird swoop down
Plunge in the water and bring up a fish
In its curved talons dripping.

Elon. I, my father,
Beheld, as I was sitting on a stone
In an arched pathway, after a long ramble,
Perhaps 'twas two hours since—hard by I spied
A serpent coiled, neck vivid ringed, head high
Advanced and eagerly intent on something
Lost in the sky. When lo—O very soon.
A pretty bird came flying round and round,
In circles ever n rrowing, until—
See ! it alights on that red forked tongue—
Tis gone—the reptile gorged it at a gulp,
And stealthily makes off.

Betoh. I too, dear father,
Saw something sad, abstruse, inexplicable :

Our Two Offerings

Alas ! why should delight and torture mingle ?
Or wanton sport run riot and subvert ?
Walking along the sandy beach this morning,
Admiring many things, till lost in revery.
Thus passing down along those shining sands,
Some kids I noticed gamboling by the water.
When suddenly—how sorrowful the tale—
A fierce beast pounced upon them, seized and
rended,
And lugged one off into the nearest thicket.
Fear chased me and I ran.

Shirah. Early this morning,
High on yon brow, a little after sunrise,
Loitering. And sometimes piping with my lips,
One of those sweet entrancing melodies,
Brought from the blissful garden by our mother.
Zemir there found me. And in concert we,
As our dear parents oft instructed us,
Chanted, or piped, or sang melodeously.
Those airs unequalled. Sometimes alternating,
A yearning melody of memories,
Wrenched from the past.

Zemir, Yes ! reveled we in music.
How kind our blest Creator to enrich us,
With speech, with singing, with the musical reed
Of our own lips, to bid grand echoes sail,

The Two Offerings.

Repeating charming harmonies, till all
The merry hills are rapturous.

Shirah. Just then,

A great dark bird dropt sweeping from the crags,
Seized a young lamb, and carried it away,
Bleating up to a rock hid eiry high.
Then half fledged nestlings shed discordant
clamor,
Feasting, as we believe.

Elon. Dear father, tell us,
Were those dread creatures armed and in the
train,
Which you beheld and named ?

Eshcol. Tell us, dear father,
Did they devour each other ? Did they fight,
Or cruelly invade each others rights ?
Or were they gentle ever ?

Adam. Ah, my children,
Original glory has departed from us.
Sin having entered, for our sakes fair earth
With all its denizens is under ban,
Yea, dark eclipse. The liberal herbs, the roots,
The tender grasses and the dainty buds,
Erst were the food of all the varied orders
Of earth and air. Ill would it now beseem us,
Were all God's creatures glad except ourselves.

The Two Offerings

The whole earth quite exempted, while we suffer.
Once the plantations of rich earth were ours,
With all their fruits and seeds. Now toil is added,
And half the original splendor is withdrawn.
Yes, our Creator, out of pity to us
The rulers, and alas, the sad offenders,
Involved the whole creation in our doom.
How terrible the vouchers of our fall,
The wailing memorizers of revolt !
We forced this rich world out of harmony.
We by one act evoked the spectre death.
The change how vast ! Now they devour each
other.

But are those tortures really what they seem ?
You ask, my children. No, they are not always.
Though ever bordered by protective fear,
A merciful provision softens down
The cruel act, and half exempts the prey
From real suffering. Merged as in a dream,
Painless their simple consciousness expires.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE VII.

*The repast now over, Parents and Children
sit or recline in the tree shaded Tent.*

AZAB. DEAR father—ah, we fear to weary thee—
Yet how delighted do we list and learn,
Narratives that to us are ever dreamlike,
And magical intensely.

Sechok. Importune?
Cease, saucy prattlers! Yet, and nevertheless,
Kind patience sits undimmed. And love will lead
Ideally, those troops of wondrous creatures,
In that sublime review.

Horam. There was the mammoth?
There, the lithe squirrel? There the tiny bird?
There the swift ostrich winged? There flying fowl?
There reptiles terrible? There insect broods?

The Two Offerings.

Eton. O were the yearlings weak and the grim
monsters
That prowl and ramp and shake the woods with
terror,
Peaceful together?

Adam. Children, you may listen. —
Ever enthusiastic, though this icon
Often have I presented.

Bright the sunshine
Of golden memories falls over me,
Even amidst the gloom. — I had just risen,
Crowned with ripe glory in my Maker's image.
He the All Beautiful beside me stood,
And summoned His glad creatures for review.
Wonder of wonders! In long varied lines
Of wavy splendor, they began their march.
I saw them moving o'er the dappled plains,
The tree clad dells, the breezy eminences,
The jagged hill tops and the deep ravines.
All shapes, each marvellous, strange, grotesque
or noble.

Strength and agility were represented,
And grace and elegance and rapturous beauty.
There the behemoth monstrous as a mountain,
Yet exquisitely moulded and superb,
There too the elephant of type sagacious,
Moved they unwieldy? No, seemed playful even,
Huge leaders of a long admiring file.
I saw each creature and perceived its nature.
And named them there. Such wisdom then
endowed me.

The Two Offerings.

Sethok. But one you saw not!

Adam. Ay, my children, ay.
The crowning one was missing.

Yapheh. 'Twas our mother,
Our own loved mother.

Adam. Sought by me in vain
Amongst God's creatures. Afterwards I saw her.
Enraptured and entranced.

Eve. Ah, dearest Adam.
How soon our bliss departed as a dream.
Alas, alas.

Adam. My Kavah, we forget
The healing love of our Offended One.
The sequel of His grace. Now we resume.

O'er the campagna on bland zephyrs sailing,
See you those birds? They fleck the firmament.
Near and afar mounting and mustering,
Singly or grouped—such varied notes and plumage.
Joined now by lesser tribes, and tiny warblers.
With twinkling pennons rapid as a thought,
Flitting from flowers and trees of aroma.
Exulting in exuberant life and freedom.
Lo! on yon hill some flapping monstrous birds.
Sail they aloft? they use their wings to speed
Their flying feet askance the dewy glebe.
But mark—ye baffling fowls so gently convoyed,
Aided by others. Are they pilgrims, led
From the salt seas and spreading continents?
What smiling oddities, what strict adaptions,
What hidden uses, what abstruse designs.
And all so exquisite, so wonderful.

The Two Darlings.

Yes, birds of every grade and every order ;
Each shape, proportion, plumage, dignity ;
Minute and monstrous, classic and grotesque.
Each as a representative appeared,
Presenting each a class, ensconced and perfect.
All good,

Yaphet. Dear father, and you named them there.
O what a ward, so thrilling, rich and dreamlike.
How dazzling but to imagine !

Shirah. Now, sweet mother,
Lovingly chant us yet one blissful song
Of life in its beginnings.

Yaohal. Do, dear mother.
Let us hear first about the shining river :
Those waters cool and sweet and softly sounding,
That rolled in silver volume.

Zemir. And the gales
That laughed and kissed the river, taught the
groves

Themes of a heavenly cadence now forgotten,
Effusing joy and odors exquisite,
Batbing these cheeks deliciously ! (*kissing her.*)

Eve. My darlings,
Much of your frequent questioning is answered —
The hidden glories of the marvellous garden,
By your sage father. Who oft entertains us ;
Dispersing the obscuring mists of night,
As a great luminary. This suffices.
Some new anxieties have overprest me.
And I have fluttered like an injured bird
Along the silver brink of this fair morn.

The Two Offerings.

Some moment opportune may yet arrive,
To answer your entreaties. So, my darlings,
Let each perform the special task allotted,
Not carelessly, but diligently well.
Labor is now both cheer and medicine,
And life's stern bulwark in our fallen estate,
Since immortality lies low and shattered.

Yapheth. Yes, but sweet mother, we are not
yet weary

Of listening to your counsels kind and loving.
And pleasant still is toil.

Azar. Just tell us, mother,
Of that rich hill of God, the prospect mountain.
Yachal. Do, dearest mother. O we tease thee so,
But such themes so enchant us.

Eve. Well, my darlings—
Can I refrain to gratify my loved ones?—
Now let your romping fancies from the glens,
The witching labyrinths, the gale rencounters,
Arise equipped with zeal to follow me.

BEYOND us, in the barred full treasured East,
Hides a rare mountain. There—its phantom rises!
O recollection princely and divine!
Monarch of hills—afar, afar behold it!
Up from that base, what stars, what limpid lights,
Peering from vines flowers shrubs trees exquisite;
With hues superb embellishing the hill.
Stars? nay! stones, prisms of special ray, great
gems,
Lonely in beauty, each in vigil sitting.

The Two Offerings.

These form a circling flight, high and upleading.
A stairway—every step a burning gem.
Such gentle ascent, a walk munificent,
In jets of lustre leading richly on,
And quivering radiantly quite to the summit.
There on a floor of polished marquetry,
Pearl-wrought and thickly gemmed, a regal seat,
Crowned with a sheaf of gay celestial plumes,
That blossomed in a halo of surprise,
Forever choice, midst stately parapets,
Invited us how oft with generous cheer.
No repetition cloyed that chaste delight.
We viewed the blissful landscape opening far,
And the seraphic prospect of the heavens,
With their exalted hosts. Oft, oft we watched
Clouds multiform huge massing heap on heap.
There zigzag lightnings gamboled proud and
keen,

Amidst sublime reverberating thunders,
Grand and imposing, glorious mid the rains
That danced for joy to shower the laughing earth.
Oft, often have I climbed that flight celestial,
With your dear father, going up and up! —
O hear you not those murmurs of rich cadence?

Yapheth. Ah, could we hear and see the things
you note,

The hill, the jewels and the regal seat :
And view the nimble fire-shafts, hear the crash
Of mountain-shaking thunders—and not fear!
Eve. O for one fruit from those empurpled vines!

The Two Offerings

Could I but climb as once those regal steps,
Mounting on gems resplendent !

Yachal. Ah, dear mother.

Azar. But were those gems of different stain
and order ?

Yapheh. How various were they ?

Eve. In variety

Twelve formed the series.

First the precious ruby—

Again it lifts ! vested in dazzling vision.
See every gem in each due course presented.
Watch ! as I point. At base the bedded ruby
Issues its fiery rule, ensanguined richly.
The topaz lights its golden orange flame.
The garnet radiant in empurpled brown.
Next, the reviving emerald sweetly sheds
Its verdant grace and joy voluptuous.
Lo ! the blue delicate sapphire, nascent, pure,
Laves with cerulean circumambient ray.
The diamond flings its many fingered flame—
What changeful brilliant hues inspire the flight !
And near, the particolored agate, ringed,
In ripe harmonious blendings burns serene.
See you the luminous amethyst superb,
Diffusing kingly purple, as of grapes ?
Next, the prized beryl, golden tinged and rare,
Kindles its fleecy beauty and steps forth.
Now the striped onyx, the rich sard, displays
New charms, august, and flecked, and softly
bright.

The Two Offerings

Comes last the spotted jasper's polished prism,
With cloud-like colors exquisitely dreamed.

Zemir. O what an amphitheatre sublime,
Fresh dewed with marvels !

Shirah. So enhanced by chimes
That sun creation with exponent light,
Pervading life and warmth and redolence.
Felt, though unnoticed.

Eve. Ever eloquent,
Song greeted us from that celestial tower,
Exhaustless and imperial.

O my darlings !
My heart grows faint, my spirit languishes,
With a great yearning, when those visions rise
In glory ineffacible.

Yapheh. Dear mother !

Eve. Yet I believe, my darlings, something
better

Is kept in store for us. After this life,
This forfeited existence shall have closed,
Something far off, in some kind way prepared.
Let us love God and so be meet for it.
His name is Wonderful, with mystery
Unsearchable, and kindness beyond thought.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE VIII.

*The bank of a River. ADAM standing
in seeming abandon. Suddenly enters
a mysterious MESSENGER.*

Mess. PRINCE—yet the child of yesterday,
all hail !

Adam. All hail ! But whence and wherefore
art thou come

To me a stranger mere, and as thou sayest
Created yesterday ?

Mess. My dwelling is
In the far mansions thou mayest yet behold,
And in the light. Some conflict loads thy breast.
And therefore am I sent.

Adam. Perplexities
Entangle me, 'tis true. And oft and oft,
Sombre become my m s i n g s.

Mess. You were thinking
Of matters late reported to your wife :
Matters beyond belief,

Adam. Yes, even so.
Alas, can such be real ?

Mess. Prince, and son
Of The Most High, although such things appear
Impossible, they may happen. Even we

The Two Offerings.

Are capable of sinning, and possess
Magnificence of might, which alienated,
Results in twofold ruin.

Adam. I have marked,
Not apprehensive, with forebodings none,
Guardians superlative, as I supposed,
Beings evanishing, who watched intent,
With pensive admiration, our fair daughters.
They came unnoticed, unperceived they went.
Could I mistrust them?

Mess. Hearken, child of God.
Some things alarm. These acts betoken ill.
Argue defection in the heavenly ranks,
And woe already in some proteus form,
Imperiling your daughters. Be advised,
Admonish them. Should they become the wives
Of angels who thus leave their first estate,
To revel earth, to castellate the air,
To blot the wor:hip of The Holy One,
Your race will be corrupted. Demigods
Will arrogate the dignity of Heaven.
With tricks and antics will bestride the world,
By rule atrocious, and evolve a race
Gigantic, horrible. Rank wickedness
Will fret and foul and desecrate each clime,
And fester earth with violence and shame,
Till purged by doom condign.

Adam. These words alarm me.
Mess. Farewell.

Adam. Farewell.—Lo, he ascends—far up.

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE IX.

*Under a tree, partly storm broken, fruitless
and trailing with moss. CAIN discovered sul-
lently leaning on a club. Enter a DEMON.*

DEMON. THY thoughts seem moody, and not
well befitting
This quiet spot. Cheer up, my friend, for truly
These shadows are relieving. And the air
Is balmy and inspiring.

Cain. Who art thou ?
Resembling all my mother's sons—But yet,
There seems a difference, tho' I scarce can tell
Precisely where it sits.

Demon. Exactly so.
My name is *Freedom*, and undoubtedly
You have not heard of me.

Cain. Possibly not.
But I suspect that python, who my mother
Says talked to her beneath the fatal tree,
Something no serpent can, had taken on him
That form for her deceiving. And by means
Of libert, dethroned us,

Demon. You are slaves,
And I would bring you back to opulence

The Two Offerings.

Of purpose and of act. Your mother's story
Looks any thing but likely. Who would need
So silly an exordium 'o partake
Of something so delightful, but withheld
I y arbitrary rule?

Cain. But we have gathered
Some bitter fruits that follow h r misdoing.
And the dread gateway witnesses to something
I npleasant even to think of.

Demon. Listen patiently.
Of all the sons and daughters of your mother,
Have any died? You can not say so?

Cain. No,
Really I cannot. They are numerous,
After myself and Abel. I was first,
And being a signal birth, alone and single,
My mother and my father both predicted
Great things, and a career. But shortly after,
Abel was similarly born. Since then,
Sometimes—nay frequently, have two competed
For the first fondlings of a mother's joy,
And sweet reward of pain.

Demon. And so it seems
As I suspected, you are now eclipsed,
Like the fair moon.

Cain. I long have felt it so.

Demon. And a black jealousy sits like the tiger

The Two Offerings.

Ready to pounce. I do not wonder at it.
You are supplanted by this very Abel,
He holds the preference. And what reason for it?
Why should it be so? Are you not the first born?
High and preeminent?

Cain. In myself I feel
The swelling of some fountain cloaked and hidden
But violently struggling.

Demon. Must I suffer
The impulse of a rich exalted nature,
And bind it by the withs of a resolve,
And hold it as a torture? As I said,
There lacks some test that you are not immortal.
Cain. None yet have died.

Demon. Nor are they likely to.
The threat may be a figment.

Cain. If I thought so—
But no—I'll put it to the proof!

Demon. Just so.
If Abel can be set aside. The if
May prove too much for you. But if—

Cain. What then?
A mountain rocking tempest, caught and pent,
Hides in my bosom.

Demon. Hold it ever there.
Nay! let it force no vent.

Cain. But something prompts me.

The Two Offerings

It must be hatred. Did you ever feel it ?

Demon. Ask not. Suppose I did, how would
— it be

Gratification to indulge the mood ?

The impulse is unsound.

Cain. It comes in gusts

Over the swelling river of my mind.

It swoops the blossoms from my trees of hope

It steals—a midnight air of sharper tone.

It fain would rouse a shudder—if it durst !

Demon disappears.

What—off so quickly ? How mysterious

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE X.

EVENING. A gentle slope. ADAM and EVE under a clump of flowering, fruit loaded trees, conversing. Their tent near by. Before them a fair River, gleaming in the night-fall. Around them, and beyond, expansive and superb hills, and rich wooded valleys adding enchantment to the night lit scene.

ADAM. NIGHT sighs amongst the hills. Now
numberless,
Trembling with light and glory leap the stars.
While in their midst a thin clear vein of radiance
Cuts the rich zenith and subtends the sky.
A gonfalon viewed edgewise, just perceived
As a vast leaf, high reaching into space.
Bordered with silvery sheen, and seeming formed
Of brilliants incandescent from the hill
Of our lost garden.

Eve. There we used to climb,
Or sit on lambent cliffs, composed of fire
That burned not and that bloomed.

Adam. Prisms crystalline,
Of exquisite beauty, dipt in choicest hues,

The Two Offerings.

Of loveliness excursive. Kavah, now
These things are memories.

Eve. Alas, we know it.
What splendors irrecoverably lost.
How the thought loads me.

Adam. Comfort let us find
In the rich message of our Adonai.
Who notwithstanding all, yet loves us.

Eve. Yea,
We feel it, and we thus our hearts appease
With confidential hope.

Adam. Yon arch sublime,
With sliding, changing spots diversified,
Soft as the moon —

Eve. But tinted. Wedged with lights
Inlaid like petalled roses sweet. So richly
Pearl lined.

Adam. A ring of fluids crystallized.
Revolving, picturesque and unimpaired,
High o'er the general ruin. There are stored
The surplus waters. Now it smites my heart
With a strange throbbing. And I tremble, lest
The gladness of this earth, already mured,
Be doomed to grosser shadow, through the vile
Corruption of our race. Dear Kavah, oft
A vision troubles me. Approaching years
May heavily betide the multitudes
To rise around us.

Eve. Now in turn, my husband,
May I not whisper comfort, and rebuke

The Two Offerings.

Sarumised disaster? Over us in waves,
Flow morn and evetide sweet and salutary,
In gentle undulations. And thus far,
Though somewhat thorny with anxieties,
Our toil have added comfort and a zest,
Midst this estranged existence. And we hope
To ward presentiments of wandering ill,
For in that hope sleep sunshine and repose.
Then may we not be glad? These thoughts
are merely
The whisper of a blast among the trees,
That revels and is gone.

Adam. Alas, my Kavah,
Would Heaven it were so. But it scarce may be.
Black clouds are gathering—hark, the thunders

The peaceful creatures are becoming changed.
Violence roars amidst the stately forests.
Where the behemah dwelt in quietude,
Where all beasts lived in harmony, misrule
Upthrusts its horid head. Even in our children,
The lurking evil, sly and ruthless works.
And in the sky and in the air, a change
Slowly encroaches on the shuddering earth.
The noon heats now oppress us; and the nights
Are chill and damp. How unlike what they
were! —

Eve. The Moon! how tenderly, in soft repose,
She sits upon the crag of yonder cliff,
Calmly dispensing her sweet silvery light.

The Two Offerings

And tho' with aspect somewhat darkening now,
Her cheeks will be relumed. And shall not ours
My dearest liege ?

Adam. Surely, my loved one, yes !—
Now, sadly sweet a memory lives before me,
Uprising o'er the abyss of many thoughts.

Eve. You see perhaps those comely creatures
coming,

To pass before you and receive their names.

Adam. Led by The Beautiful One.

Eve. Did He uplead them ?

Adam. Yes, by a word—one gentle word. How
fleet,

With graceful motions, and with frolic acts,
All lovingly they came.

Eve. And you beheld
Some exquisitely moulded, some grotesque,
Some vast in bulk, some wondrous, some uncouth
Admiring ? There you named them. In a trice
You comprehended each. Discerned the office
Imposed on every creature : and bestowed
Befitting names.

Adam. But, Kava ! were you then
Not with me ?

Eve. Ah !— I vividly remember
Awaking as from sleep ; sleep O how deep,
Dreamless, with nought beyond it. On that
moment,

Vitality, time, joy and glory swept

The Two Offerings

In golden vision o'er me. By me stood
The ONE all unapproached in loveliness,
And just beyond, sketched on a bank of flowers,
Seeming engrossed in dreams, I spied another,
Resembling the High Personage who now,
Majestical and kind beyond expression,
With courtesy celestial led me forth,
Amidst the warbling birds and nodding fruits,
And puffs of air that dipt their mirthful wings
In balm and aroma delicious,
As we two passed along, I and the KING,
To where the sleeper lay ingulfed in flowers.
With head upon one arm and limbs diffused,
There he lay soundly sleeping, and how sweetly.
Fairer than since, yea even before our blight.
A strange attraction flung its toils around me.
Then spoke The King gently accosting you.
You waked—arose—we met —O wondrous
rapture—

We saw each other—thrilling fell your voice,
Sweeter than singing birds, and furnished forth
The joy of my existence. Then was life
Richer than sunshine on a thousand plumes. •

THE TWO OFFERINGS.

SCENE XI.

MIDNIGHT.

EVE alone : walking before her tent.

EVE. IT STEALS along the hillside, as of waters,
An intermittent throb. I only, now
Arise to watch and ponder. It is strange,
But slumber seems to dread me or disdain
Eyes that have stooped to weeping. With full
heart,

I strove to cheer my husband, and divert
Presageful thoughts, that like a heavy stone
Lay on his shoulders. Neither is it rare
That I should play the soother, I who oft
Indulge despondent moods, and sink dismayed,
Till he uplifts me with a cordial word,
And thrills my soul with gladness. Sleep, my
liege.

The midnight air is chill. And high above me
The heaven is thick with spangles ; and the moon
O'ermasters them with glory. I alone
Refuse to rest. Disquietude with teeth
Sharp, and with ravening paws has pounced
upon me.

Some undefinable dread beats at my heart,
Forbidding slumber. Sleep, my loved ones, sleep.

I the sad mother of all living, wait
In feverish vigil. Has some ill befallen ?
Abel returned not to his tent this even.
Is he still watching o'er his flock to-night ?
I know not. And I gaze into the deep
And lofty dome of night, and I discover
No clue to the stern questionings that blind us
As with a cloud.

What gleam ! what star is that ?
As if far travelled through a shoreless space.
Brighter—it brightens !—Are these messengers ?
How excellent—how glorious. Absorbed
In splendor as of holiness sublime.
I tremble, tho' enraptured. There seem many.
A brilliant troop on some high mandate sent.
Two of them now have left the starry globe,
And are descending. Will they visit us ? ——
Adam !—awake, my lord !——I hesitated.
Angelic messengers did just descend,
They come not to our tent. O'er yonder hill
I saw them gliding down, as streams the sunlight
On a gray rack just at the ope of day,
Imparting splendor that is foreign to it.
And see, my liege, just by that soft clear star,
Another star of variable contour,
Rich and illuminate with abluent light,
Floats poised and passive !

Adam. Did you see their faces,
My Kaveh ? Be they messengers of grace ?

I see the star—how brilliant ! It may be
Composed of glorious beings. Yes, I think so.

Eve. But what can be the mission of the twain ?

Adam. Two only—you beheld them ?

Eve. Very clearly
In their own light, the soft, the eloquent light,
From the abyss of glory,

Adam. Ah—behold !
Two ?—there are three ! Whence is the other ?
were there

But two ?——not more ?

Eve. But two indeed, my lord.
I saw them most distinctly. I regret
I did not waken you, when first I noticed them
Descending from the starry globe.

Adam. Dear Kava !
Did you see that ? The one who turned his head,
And smiled and beckoned us ?

Eve. Adam, 'tis Abel !
Again he smiles. What means this new display ?
Oh, how angelic. Can this be indeed,
Our very son—our Abel ?

Adam. It is he !
But scarcely can I comprehend this scene.
Is it indeed most real ? Or do we dream ?
Beneath their feet, a golden mist expands. —
Pausing quiescent, and just out of call !
Life's plastic matrice moulding each distinctly,
In the true subscript, type and cast of joy.
We know it, and have lost—but there—restored,
Exemplified, before our straining eyes,

In our dear Abel.

Eve. Are they taking him,
To escape the wrath of Cain? O say, my liege?
Really do you think so? Will he ever
Return to us again? See, they go up!
The three are entering now the shining globe.
Was that a strain of music? Lo, how fleet!
How swift—how swift,—'tis almost hid—'tis
gone!

Adam, what means all this?

Adam. My dearest Kavah,
Let us rejoice.— I see it all—I know it.
Our Abel has gone up—but thro' the cave
That we must enter. Somewhere in the field,
Hidden perhaps, but bloodless, stark and cold,
Lies Abel's body—but the man is gone.
The lawless hate of Cain has laid him low,
But could not harm him. Comfort springs
in this.

Eve. Ah, I have feared it. O my Cain! my
Abel!

Can I believe it? —And do I survive,
In all this tideless woe.

Adam. My dearest Kavah,
Let us be comforted. 'Tis well with Abel.
Repine we must not, though a brother's hand
In fatal frenzy forced him from our tent.

Eve. Must we embrace him nevermore!

Adam. Sweet Kavah,
We shall be with him and be glad—doubt not.

The Two Offerings

Suppose we had not sinned, do you not know
That after golden days, heaped up perhaps
Like glittering sands; from midst our childrens'
children,

We should have been uptaken and advanced
To other habitations and delights,
Amidst celestial homes ?

Eve. Should we have passed
Undying into far beatitudes ?

Adam. From glory unto glory ! Mounting ever,
In just gradation and supreme advancement,
God's scale of marvels.

Eve. Adam, but how could we ?
We that are weighted down ?

Adam. Ah, dearest Kava, .
How little do we glean in all our dreamings,
Of the untold resources of our Father.
Will He not bring His favor near ? Most surely,
Through the rich bounty of a high design,
In which there lay comprised a peradventure.
Lo. all infinitudes prostrate before Him,
Adore the awful Majesty of Heaven.
And shall not we in grateful homage render,
The tributes of submissive trust and love.

LAMECH.



LAMECH.

THE PERSONS.

LAMECH.

ADA AND ZILLA, WIVES TO LAMECH.

ADA.

SHE comes—O shameful ! leaning on his arm.
See ! he has woven a chaplet of rich blossoms.
And stoops and places it upon her brow,
With amorous kisses. How it stings my soul !
I quiver with resentment. Bursting fires,
Fanned by ingratitude, consume me. Once,
I was his first love and his only love,
The wife first wedded and the single bride.
Now is my right invaded, trampled, crushed.
I sit no longer queen of his affections.
Another has usurped my throne, who scorns me.
O Lamech, Lamech, is my love abhorred ?
And my devotedness that knew no bounds ?
Oh, an inveterate rage is stifling me.
What shall I do—ah, whither shall I turn ?

ENTER *Lamech and Zilla.*

Lamech, thou false hearted !

To Zilla.

Treacherous nymph—

Lamech, she stole my love—robbed me of right.

Lamech.

ZILLA.

Avaunt, dear mistress.

ADA.

Give me back that chaplet.
Thus do I snatch it—tear it—trample on it!
And thus adjust the ringlets on thy shoulders—
As I've been spurned and trampled. Hussy!
take that.

Slapping her, and spoiling her curls.

ZILLA.

Nay—not so saucy.—Lamech, saw you that?
And not protect me?

LAMECH.

Nay, my loves, be kind.
Why will you differ and provoke me thus?
I live for both. Is not my love sufficient?
Whole, though divided.

ADA.

Lamech, dare you thus?
Well art thou named, black augury of ill:

Lamech.

Wild overthrower of domestic peace.
Mine is the prior, mine the only right,
To your ripe love. I hate this vile division.
Where did you learn it? Never was the like.
I'll not endure it. Give me back my life:
You robbed me of it. Cast this base nymph off.

ZILLA.

Hark, saucy mate, take back that epithet.
Am I not Lamech's wife. What more are you?

ADA.

Nothing—I'm nothing. Lamech nods and fawns
Upon a minx—yes minx: while his true wife,
Disreputably fades in lorn contempt.
O shame. O infamous. Unworthy man.
The first to desecrate the marriage state,
And foul the waters of serene content.
Wretch! what induced you thus to cast away
The jewel of my love.

LAMECH.

My sweetest Ada.

ZILLA.

Sweet call you her? I thought that I alone,
The latest won, was now supremely sweetest,

Lamech.

LAMECH.

Zilla, my darling. Ada—both my darlings,
My sunshine and my joy. Oh, be at peace.

ADA.

Sunshine indeed !

ZILLA.

Now Lamech, hearken to me :
I'll none of that. Send off this woman. Place her
In some dark nook, a day's tramp from my bower,
Or vengeance will o'ertake thee.

ADA.

Hearken, Lamech :
You promised me the affluence of bliss,
An ocean of affection. You are false !
And I shall hate you if you do not place
Your heel upon this woman. She insults me.

ZILLA.

Nay, plant your foot on her—or bear my hatred.

ADA.

Tear him in pieces ! fling him to the wolves.

Lamech.

ZILLA.

False has he been to both of us.

ADA.

Let Cain
Come forward and avenge me!

ZILLA.

Give his corse
To the black vultures.

ADA.

Let the eagles sailing
Above yon splintered pinnacle, descry him
Wedged in its crevice.

ZILLA.

All too good for him,
Is any punishment. Our aids are ready:
Twenty young men will help us willingly.
And each shall have a husband to herself.

ADA.

Not chapt and minced : no hodge podge and
no sham.

Lamech.

LAMECH.

Now cease my darlings, listen to me calmly.
My Ada and my Zilla hear my voice.
Lo, I have slain a man—for wounding me.
Justly ! a young man, for assaulting me.
If Cain shall be avenged a seven fold :
Then surely Lamech seventy and seven.

ADA.

Name the offence that so embittered you.
How dare you thus requite him ?

LAMECH.

Love impelled me.
Jealously I defended your dear honor.
The miscreant sought to foil my darlings from me.
I wrested both my fair ones from his clutches.
Have you ne'er thought some destiny may wink ?
I wooed you both, and won you. Strive no more,
I love you equally—devotedly,
And will defend you, cherish and protect.
And who can tell but that in after years,
Our sons may be the boast of this wide earth,
The famed originators of new arts.
Ambitious of renown, and seated high

Lamech.

On rock built fastnesses that crown the mountains.

Let these hopes cheer us, feuds and broils
no more

Disgrace the partners of my truest joys.
Straitway I will provide you homes apart,
And distant from each other. I shall be
A visitor who supplicates the grace
Of a kind lodgement and a genial rest,
After stern days of toil.

ZILLA.

Forgive me, Ada,
But really the fault is scarcely mine ;
Lamech is the transgressor. Well he knows,
He wooed me ardently—seductively—
Determined and resistless. Swayed my will,
And chained me to his heart.

ADA.

I must forgive thee,
And yet how difficult—and Lamech also,
Despite his cruel act. Alas, that love
So deep, so fixed as mine, should be requited
With a half heart and a whole life's repining.

L a m e c h .

LAMECH.

Think not so sadly, dear ones, just forget it.
Both shower and sunshine mellow the rich fruits,
And some cloud muffled fate perhaps is pregnant
With our brief history.—Let us hope for good.



et it.
rich fruits,
pregnant
or good.